NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS
Quarterly Report

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H. R. 5170

H. R. 5170 is the official designation of the Congressional bill that will establish a National Trust for the Preservation of Historic Sites in the United States. It means that the first step has been taken to create the proposed sister organization of the National Council for Historic Sites and Buildings.

The Department of the Interior, through its National Park Service, has long felt the need for supplementing the provisions of the Historic Sites Act of 1935. The Department suggested that a bill be prepared for introduction to Congress after a study had been made of the report of the National Council's Committee on the Organization of a National Trust. The National Park Service collected basic material. At this point Congressman J. Hardin Peterson, of Florida, who had expressed great interest in the movement, requested the material prepared by the Park Service. He then introduced H. R. 5170 into the House of Representatives. He carefully guided the bill through the Committee on Public Lands. The hearing on it was brief, largely because there was a virtual unanimity of opinion that this was desirable legislation. The bill was referred back to the House, where it now awaits action. At the time of going to press, the bill has not yet been introduced into the Senate.

On June 22nd the New York Herald Tribune printed an editorial on behalf of the proposed National Trust that gives succinct point to the effort being made.

PRESERVING BY NATIONAL TRUST

The House Committee on Public Lands on Monday favorably reported H. R. 5170. This bill, we believe, has an importance measured by its primary purpose. It would create a non-governmental national trust which would, according to the Committee's chairman, J. Hardin Peterson, of Florida, "mobilize resources and secure benefits not available to the National Park Service... and therefore can materially further the preservation and interpretation of historic sites and buildings in the United States.

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Chairman Peterson points out, and we agree, that there is definite need in the United States for a trust whose workings would follow largely that of its British model. The worth to our population of such an organization would increase steadily with the years, and it would, like the British trust, grow vastly through gifts of historic sites and landmarks, which might otherwise become lost to the past or present, or be turned to ownership and use which could mean their complete passing from our national heritage.

It is plainly impossible for the Federal government to take over all the historic sites and buildings in the forty-eight states which need to be preserved, and state and local agencies often fail of funds or patriotic interest. The answer, we believe, clearly lies in such a bill as the Public Lands Committee has favorably reported. We join with the National Council for Historic Sites and Buildings in urging that the bill receive in the present Congress the consideration and prompt action it deserves.

1949 Annual Meeting, October 12-14: Williamsburg, Virginia, is a particularly lovely place in October of each year. Through the efforts of the National Council's Vice President, Kenneth Chorley, who is President of Colonial Williamsburg, Inc., arrangements have been made for the holding of the third annual meeting there in mid-October. Registration will be in the late afternoon of Wednesday, October 12th, and the staff of Colonial Williamsburg, Inc., will offer a special program that night. On the following morning the National Council will hold its opening session. Because it is felt that the location offers a splendid open-air laboratory for the study of preservation and restoration, the number of indoor meetings will be minimized. The annual dinner will be on the night of October 13th. The meetings will formally close by mid-afternoon on the 14th, although arrangements for informal tours of near-by areas will be made for those who plan to stay over the week end in Williamsburg. Those who wish to make early reservations may do so by writing to the Manager, Williamsburg Inn. Blocks of rooms in both the Inn and the Lodge have been set aside for members of the Council. During the course of the summer further notice will be sent to all members and member societies, who should appoint their delegates in the near future.

"History in the Air" might be the title of the United Air Lines new informational policy. In addition to giving altitude, weather conditions, and the like over the public address system, a pilot was recently reported as saying "We are now crossing the Delaware a few miles north of where Washington crossed, and on our left is Morristown, a virtual museum of the War of Independence."

Prospects Dim for Salvage Archeology Program Outside Missouri Basin: The salvage archeology program being undertaken by the National Park Service in cooperation with the Smithsonian Institution was dealt a serious blow when the House of Representatives eliminated the entire item for areas about to be inundated outside the Missouri Basin. Unless this item is restored by the Senate, where the appropriations are now pending, there will be no funds available for the fiscal year 1950 either for surveys or excavations in proposed reservoir areas in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California, and Texas. A supplemental request to the 1949 appropriation for emergency funds for the vital areas of Buggs Island (Virginia), Allatoona (Georgia), Fort Gibson (Oklahoma), Davis Dam (Arizona) and McNary (Oregon) were likewise denied by the House, but $20,000 was added to the bill on the floor of the Senate upon motion of Senator Russell, to finance excavations at Allatoona Reservoir.

Within the Missouri Basin, prospects for carrying on the program are much brighter. House action approved the appropriation bill carrying an item of approximately $185,000 for surveys and excavations in many of the reservoirs in this area. This appropriation, however, is likewise awaiting action by the Senate.

The State of Washington has raised its automobile driver's license fees in order to improve its state parks. For the first time a sizable sum has been set apart specifically for the development and acquisition of historical sites.

Preservation of Castle Clinton Made Possible: The possibility of preserving Castle Clinton, in Battery Park in New York City, was heightened in April when Governor Thomas

E. Dewey signed the De Salvio-Quinn bill. This bill conveys the state's interest in the Battery land to the city and authorizes the city in turn to convey it to the Federal government for a national monument. It is contingent upon a Congressional appropriation by July 1, 1950, of funds for restoring the fort and is subject to the right of the city to construct and operate the Battery Park underpass between the Brooklyn tunnel and the Miller Highway. Because there is active opposition to this preservation and because there are many questions still left unsettled, it will be some time before the final decision will be known. The American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, under the leadership of Mr. George A. McAneny, continues to lead the fight against the destruction of the Fort.

> The American Society of Landscape Architects recently forwarded to the National Council a query from Brussels, Belgium. It was reported that the Hotel Aubecq in that city had been purchased by a financial group who planned to tear it down for a new apartment building. It is one of the most notable works of the great Belgian architect, Victor Horta. General Grant noted this material with the comment: "Maybe La Rochefoucauld was right, there is consolation in the troubles of others."

Valley Forge Threatened by Extension of Pennsylvania Turnpike: Very carefully avoiding actual infringement on the property of Valley Forge State Park, the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission has routed its eastward extension from the Harrisburg vicinity through historically important ground immediately abutting the Park boundary. The new superhighway will cut in two the so-called "Headquarters Area", where many of the Revolutionary generals wintered. Moreover it will change radically a section hitherto relatively undisturbed, making interpretation and appreciation of the scene as it once was that much more difficult.

For some months the National Council has conferred with individual Pennsylvanians who are working to have this section of the Turnpike rerouted. A letter to the Governor of the State received only brief attention and denied the feasibility of rerouting. The local groups and national groups that have rallied to the cause have not been able to sway the official decision. This would seem to be a good example of a phrase used in the National Council's Fact Sheet: "the modern juggernaut of the machine age...reaching out to destroy even our few remaining landmarks". Various plans for attempting to counteract the destruction are still being tried, and the fight is not yet over.

Ironically, in April the Joint State Government Commission, a legislative fact-finding agency in Pennsylvania, listed for preservation more than 70 historical sites in the State and advocated a statute to prohibit the sale or destruction of any of the buildings or sites until the proposed action has been called to the attention of the General Assembly. Some of the places cited have already disappeared, like the William Croghan home at Stanton Heights, which was recently torn down to make room for a real estate development.

The National Park Service's Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, and Buildings & Monuments, at a recent meeting, passed the following resolution: "Resolved, That the Advisory Board express its gratification at the excellent progress achieved by the National Council for Historic Sites and Buildings in the development of its program and in establishing a sound basis for future work which promises to aid and supplement the work of the National Park Service."

Membership Campaign Gets Under Way: With the publication of the Facts Sheet and the revision and re-issue of Preserving America's Heritage, the National Council's membership campaign has started. It has already been discovered that personal contact by present members with persons known to be interested in the movement brings the best results. One of our Chicago members, Dr. Hans Huth, has brought in a half a dozen new members in this way. The Chairman of our Committee on Information, Mr. Albert Kornfeld, makes a practice of carrying with him some of the Council literature on his trips, so that he can tell others about the work. Other members have written personal notes to friends, while still others drop a line to Council Headquarters telling about likely prospects. Many member organizations have forwarded their complete mailing lists and, during the summer, literature will be sent to these prospects. Slowly the roll of active members is growing, and it will continue to grow just as long as the present membership continues to take a personal interest in the campaign.

Although no general mailing has as yet been made to the hundreds of preservation and historical societies that should be affiliated with the National Council, four new member organizations have been added to the roll - Addison Gallery of American Art, at Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts; Antiquarian and Landmarks Society, Inc., of Connecticut; Forest Preserve District of Cook County; and Society for the Preservation of Landmarks in Western New York, Inc. Not only is it encouraging to have their support, but it augurs well for the future. The influence of the National Council will be widespread indeed as more and more regional, state, county and local societies become active members.

It is with the deepest regret that the National Council takes note of the death of two of its active supporters. On February 18th Miss Gabriella Page, President of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, died suddenly of a heart attack. Mr. Arthur D. Lisle, President of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, died on March 30th. Both Miss Page and Mr. Lisle lent their enthusiasm to the formation of the National Council and they will be sorely missed.

Preservation of the White House: No reader of the public prints can be unaware of the stir that has been created by the question of what is going to happen to the White House. In mid-June Congress appropriated $5,400,000 to remodel or reconstruct the building or to construct a separate dwelling. A six-man commission has been appointed to decide two major questions: whether the President will get new living quarters separate from his working quarters; and whether the White House is to be rebuilt from the ground up or merely

repaired. Chairman of the commission is Senator McKellar, of Tennessee; deputy chairman is Douglas William Orr, former president of the American Institute of Architects. The other members are Senator Martin, of Pennsylvania; Representatives Rabaut, of Michigan, and Keefe, of Wisconsin; and Richard E. Dougherty, vice president of the New York Central Railroad and former president of the American Society of Civil Engineers. The commission will hold its first meeting at the end of June and will gather once a week thereafter until the issue is decided. The President is reported as advocating repair of the White House, although conceding that an entirely new building might be less costly. Another former occupant of the White House, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, who devoted an entire column in May to an excellent account supporting the National Council, has also advocated repair and saving of the old historic mansion.

Mr. George E. MacAneny, a member of the Council's Executive Board as well as one of its founders, has been celebrating his 80th birthday in divers ways. For one thing he has been picking up various deserved honors - the Founder's Medal, dedicated to the memory of Chauncey M. Depew and awarded by the New York Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution "for distinguished public service," and a special dinner at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in New York City for his 40 years work to secure the rehabilitation of City Hall. For another thing, after quietly pointing out that he could at least talk on behalf of the National Council and National Trust, in spite of his years, he represented this organization at a meeting of the Garden Club of America, of the Women's Division of the Museum of the City of New York, and at the dedication of a plaque at the Voorlezer's House on Staten Island. His work in the field of historic preservation is never-ending.

The Affair at Hadlyme Ferry, Connecticut: A small ferryboat always chugged back and forth across the Connecticut River at Hadlyme Ferry, where five lovely early Federal houses nestled under some magnificent trees. There was a secondary road that wound toward the riverbank and the site had not been much disturbed in the last 100 years. Most of the traffic that went up and down the East Coast traveled over the bridges several miles away. Then, in 1948, legislation was enacted authorizing a new ferryboat and "appurtenances thereto."

The danger to the little community was soon apparent and local residents enlisted the aid of other local, as well as state, groups. After the battle was joined, someone heard about the National Council for Historic Sites and Buildings. After a meeting in Washington, a National Council representative went to Hadlyme Ferry to investigate and seek a possible solution. With the aid of Senator Raymond Baldwin of Connecticut a compromise was found. Legislation was introduced to minimize the effect of "the appurtenances", which otherwise would have wrecked the little settlement, on the score that it was unique historically along the Connecticut River banks.

Although action is still pending on the matter, several valid points can be made. First, the National Council can make its influence felt throughout the country effectively in just this sort of action. It was possible for the Council's representative to serve

as mediator between two opposed points of view. He could suggest on the basis of the experience of the whole membership of the Council a solution to the problem and could seek to make it work. But - and this is a most important point - because of lack of personnel and funds, the National Council was not able to follow through. The help that was given was limited, as it is in all similar cases. This is one of the greatest problems confronting the Council today. Until it is solved, until there is adequate trained personnel to cope with the amazing variety of problems that confront preservationists today, until there is money enough to meet emergencies and to follow through, the influence of your organization will necessarily be limited.

A separate subscription list for the Quarterly Report, at $1.50 a year, has been set up. Added to it recently were the Burnham Library of Architecture, of the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Library of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Preservations in Progress: Despite the fact that information is beginning to come into Headquarters office from many sections of the country, there is no pretense that the listing of current preservation efforts is complete. One of the heartening factors in this work is to note how much activity there is not alone in this category but in a section to follow, on preservations that are planned. If member organizations and individual members will inform the Washington office about recent projects, a fuller report will be given in the next issue of the Quarterly Report.

California Missions. Monterey County's Mission San Antonio de Padua held a special ceremony at the end of April to mark "notable progress" in the restoration of the Franciscan missionary outpost founded by Fray Junipero Serra in 1771. The foundations of the third mission built in California have been reinforced and the breaks in the massive walls repaired. Further south, work was begun in May on the reconstruction of two wings of historic San Luis Rey, another 18th century Franciscan mission. Still standing sections of the old arches and arcades will be incorporated into the new wings. Original foundations, adobe bricks and tile will be utilized together with sound sections of the ancient massive timbers.

Rock Hall, Hempstead, Long Island, New York. Rock Hall, an 18th century home located near Lawrence, Long Island, is being restored and furnished by the Town of Hempstead. For 125 years the house was occupied by the Hewlitt family, who gave it, with ten acres of land, to the Town. The shingled three-story structure has end chimneys, and exceptionally beautiful early railing around the roof, and a central hall running from front to back. The Chairman of the Committee overseeing the restoration, which was appointed by the Town Board, is Mrs. Bertha Rose, a Council member.

Woodlawn, Alexandria, Virginia. The Woodlawn Public Foundation, Inc., has paid off $95,000 of the purchase price of the property, has taken official possession, and hopes to complete payment of every cent of the remaining debt by Washington's Birthday in 1950. Donations are still being received at the office adjoining the National Council Headquarters and at the historic house itself, which is being kept open by a volunteer staff of local residents.

Roger Williams' Trading Post, Rhode Island. The Cocumcussoc Association, headed by a Council member, Mr. Norman Smith, has acquired an important historic site closely associated with Roger Williams and the Great Swamp Fight, and on which is located the Richard Smith Block House. The Association is actively at work on the necessary restoration in order to preserve this important page in American history.

Sag Harbor Custom House, Long Island, New York. The first custom house in New York State, constructed in 1789, was the scene of a cornerstone re-laying ceremony in May.

This is the building that had to be moved last fall in order to circumvent destruction. The project was successful through the efforts of the Old Sag Harbor Committee, a group of women interested in preserving local landmarks. Council member Charles Edison, former Governor of New Jersey, supplied the funds for moving the building. Repairs have been made and the interior will be restored by the Committee.

Old Presbyterian Meeting House, Alexandria, Virginia. For more than 60 years this fine old church structure, built in 1774 by Scotch pioneers who had founded Alexandria, lay dormant and unused. From its pulpit had spoken some of early America's great preachers and orators. In its churchyard there still rests the "Unknown Soldier" of the Revolutionary War, who was "known but to God". Sponsored by the Second Presbyterian Church, a group of people have formed a new congregation at the Old Meeting House. After a preliminary clearing up, shared in by all the new members, the old church was rededicated at the end of May. Plans are being formulated for further restoration, but in the meantime this ancient shrine has become again a living church, open to all.

The New York State Historical Association's "Seminars on American Culture," to be held in Cooperstown, New York, July 5-15, will include the following sections: Creative Uses of History; Early American Crafts; History in the Library; Survey of American Folklore; Restoration and Use of Historic Buildings; American Folk Art; Folklore Collecting; Problems of History Museum Interpretation; Tides of Taste in New York State; and Writing of Local History. Many members of the National Council will be participating.

Proposed Preservations: Activity in this category ranges from Maine to San Juan, Puerto Rico, and from California to New York, but once again there can be no claim to completeness. There is still much that is happening throughout the country that is not well known nationally, a condition that demonstrates clearly the need for a National Council for Historic Sites and Buildings.

St. Croix Island National Monument and San Juan National Historic Site. The National Park Service has added two more magnificent sites to its chain of more than 100 areas of historic and archeologic significance. In early June, President Truman signed a bill authorizing establishment of a national monument on St. Croix, a seven-acre island in the St. Croix River, which forms the boundary between Maine and New Brunswick, Canada. This is the scene of one of the earliest French settlements in the present United States. The other historical area is also connected with exploration and discovery, but with the Spanish phase. The site at San Juan will include the massive forts of El Morro, San Cristobal, and Casa Blanca in San Juan itself, much of the still-standing fortification of the old city, and El Canuelo, a small fortification on the other side of the entrance of San Juan harbor. While the Department of the Army retains primary jurisdiction over these ancient fortifications, funds will become available on July 1st for the initiation of an historical and interpretive program by the National Park Service.

Walt Whitman Birthplace, Huntington, New York. A small group of Whitman admirers have gathered together to buy the 130 year-old house in which the poet was born. A vesper service to launch the movement was held on the grounds on May 31st. Cleveland Rodgers, a member of the New York City Planning Commission and a former editor of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle (Whitman's old newspaper), heads the group, which includes many prominent literary figures.

Crescent City Lighthouse, California. Del Norte County leaders are asking the Federal Government for a 93-year-old lighthouse, slated for destruction, for use as a museum. The sentinel will soon be replaced by a robot light and a great deal of interest has been stimulated in favor of preserving the old structure.

Treadwell House, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Under the leadership of Miss Agnes P. Greer, a movement has been launched to save the 191-year-old Treadwell House, which has been offered for sale. The building is interesting not alone for its architecture but also because it is linked with the history of the state, especially during the War of 1812.

Francis Scott Key House, Washington, D. C. The Columbia Historical Society is conducting a campaign to induce Congress to name Key's old residence as a national shrine. The building was carefully dismantled in order to make way for a new elevated highway in Washington and the materials were stored. It is proposed that it be rebuilt on a plot near the Key Bridge between Washington and Virginia.

The Academy, Clermont, New York. This is one of the most interesting of all of the proposed restorations because it is being done by the local committee for a War Memorial. The restoration of the historic Academy, which was built in 1834 on the site of the first school house in New York State, seemed to the town of much greater service than a sculptural or monumental structure. It will be used as a recreation and education center.

San Gabriel Mission Grounds, California. Civic organizations and leaders have started a movement to obtain as a park the grounds and the old adobe believed to have served as a home for mission priests while San Gabriel Mission was being built. Part of the adobe was built in the 1770's and is thought to be the first structure built at San Gabriel.

Patrick Henry Home, Virginia. The restoration of "Red Hill", near Lynchburg, Virginia, is the object of a campaign for funds being conducted by the Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation. The Foundation, organized by James S. Easley, acquired 900 acres of the original plantation in 1945. Only Patrick Henry's law office and several slave cabins remain of the buildings Henry knew, but the exact measurements of the original home are known so that reconstruction is possible.

Fort Lafayette, New York City. Park Commissioner Robert Moses was given a starring role as a preservationist in an article in the New York Times on April 2nd in connection with the saving of Fort Lafayette, which has guarded the New York City harbor since 1812. He is credited with having secured its release from the Federal Government so that it may serve as a "restful park center" in the future. No money has yet been made available for the project.

> The Staten Island Historical Society has announced the formation of a National Foundation for the Restoration of Historic Richmondtown, Staten Island. Showing Dutch, French, English, and American occupation during parts of four centuries, it will reconstruct a village center beginning with the 17th century Voorlezer's House and ending with 1920, when the county seat was moved away.

The Passing Parade. A solemn note of warning is seen in the stream of material concerning destruction or imperilment of historic sites that comes into the Council's Headquarters. It is impossible to give full accounts of each one, but the gist can be gained from quotations from newspaper accounts and from the Council files.

New York City: PAYNE WHITNEY FIFTH AVENUE HOME TO BE CONVERTED TO APARTMENTS. FIVE-STORY, 40-ROOM RESIDENCE NEAR 79TH STREET, DESIGNED BY STANFORD WHITE, IS SOLD.

Los Angeles: WHAT IS TO BE THE FATE OF THE OLD ORIGINAL LOS ANGELES HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING, NOW STANDING FORLORN, IN RATHER SAD REPAIR, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN, DIRECTLY IN THE PATH OF THE NEW HOLLYWOOD FREEWAY?

Cleveland: HOPES DASHED FOR MUSEUM IN LAKEWOOD. NICHOLSON HOUSE WOULD BE TOO EXPENSIVE TO PRESERVE AS A MUSEUM, LAKEWOOD COUNCIL IS EXPECTED TO RULE.

Long Island: HISTORIC WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT LIBRARY TORN DOWN IN CLEARING ROSLYN APPROACHES TO NEW VIADUCT ACROSS HEMPSTEAD HARBOR.

New York City: THE HOME OF ALEXANDER HAMILTON ON WASHINGTON HEIGHTS NEEDS REPAIRS. LACK OF FUNDS IMPERILS LANDMARK.

Portsmouth, New Hampshire: HISTORIC PIERCE HOMESTEAD PURCHASED BY CHURCH GROUP. WILL BE TORN DOWN TO MAKE WAY FOR NEW EDIFICE.

Willow Grove, Pennsylvania: ARSONIST BELIEVED TO HAVE SET FIRE THAT WRECKED PART OF HISTORIC HORSHAM INN.

New York City: MAYOR GETS PLEAS ON WASHINGTON SQUARE TO DELAY N.Y.U. DEAL WITH SAILORS SNUG HARBOR.

Maine: SITE OF BENEDICT ARNOLD CAMP TO BE FLOODED BY DAM ALONG THE DEAD RIVER OF WEST-CENTRAL MAINE.

New York City: FUND DRIVE ON TO SAVE HISTORIC NEW YORK HOME. "MERCHANT'S HOUSE" BUILT IN 1830 ON 4TH STREET: CENTURY IN SAME FAMILY.

Uniontown, Pennsylvania: 114-YEAR-OLD HISTORICAL TOLL HOUSE AT SEARIGHTS DESERTED. EFFORTS BEING MADE BY STATE OFFICIALS TO RESTORE BUILDING.

Philadelphia: DREXEL TREASURES ON SALE THIS WEEK. FURNISHINGS OF BIG MANSION AT BRYN MAWR WILL GO IN AN END-OF-ERA AUCTION.

Cannonsburg, Pennsylvania: TRADITION-LADEN MANSION HOUSE GOES DOWN, VICTIM OF PROGRESS. HOME BUILT WELL OVER 100 YEARS AGO WRECKED AND TORN DOWN IN FEW DAYS.

An "institute in the Preservation and Interpretation of Historic Sites and Buildings" was held in Washington, D. C., and Williamsburg, Virginia, from June 6th to 24th. Offered by American University in cooperation with the National Park Service and Colonial Williamsburg, Inc., the Institute provided an intensive examination of policies and techniques involved in preservation and restoration work. Typical problems were studied on field trips each afternoon. Representatives of a number of organizations, including the National Council, participated.